(d) whether there is any proposal to extend this scheme to benefit more farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme has been implemented by Cooperative Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Commercial Banks in all States and Union Territories of India since August 1998. Though Uttaranchal was formed only in November 2000, the Scheme was being implemented by above agencies in undivided U.P. before formation of Uttaranchal. As such the scheme is in operation in the State of Uttaranchal from the date of its creation. The amount of funds sanctioned under the scheme during 2001-02 and during the current year (upto Sept. 2006), are as follows:

(Rs. in lakh)

Period	Cooperative Banks	Region Rural Banks	Commercial Banks	Total amount sanctioned
Till March 2001	Nil	Nil	465	465
2001-02	11761	441	3974	16176
2006-07*	7422	2628	5377	15427

*Data provisional (till Sept. 2006)

(d) NABARD has advised Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks to continue their endeavour to identify and bring into the KCC fold other farmers including oral lessees, tenant farmers, share-croppers etc.

Reduction of excise duty on pharmaceutical products

1391. SHRI S.K. KHABIR UDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Dr. Proneb Sen Committee has recommended to reduce excise duty on all pharmaceutical products from 16 per cent to 8 per cent; and

(b) if so, whether Government would agree to this proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government had examined earlier a proposal for reduction in excise duty on pharmaceutical products from 16% to 8%, but it was decided not to make any changes for the present.

Making educational loan lending process hastle free

1392. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to make educational loan lending process hastle free, the Ministry has endorsed Public Sector Banks demand for setting up of a guarantee fund on the lines of a similar scheme existing for the small enterprises sector;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this fund will enhance the comfort level of the banks to sanction loans for higher and technical educational courses without insisting on the collateral or a third party guarantee; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) Public Sector Banks (PSB) have not made a demand for setting up of a guarantee fund to make educational loan lending process hastle free. As per extant guidelines of IBA, loans up to Rs. 4 lakh for higher and technical educational courses, are to be sanctioned by PSBs without insisting on the collateral or a third party guarantee.

Taxes on corporates

1393. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to make reduction in taxes on corporates in view of higher revenue collections;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what was the total revenue collected during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06?